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Progress report of the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange sponsors

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2018/227 and past practices, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the progress report of the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange SDMX sponsors. The report contains a summary of achievements, recent developments and planned activities by the initiative in areas such as the Sustainable Development Goals and international merchandise trade statistics. An overview of capacity development in the area is also included. The Statistical Commission is invited to take note of the report.

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Progress report of the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange sponsors

I. Introduction

1. In 2001, the Bank for International Settlement, the European Central Bank, Eurostat, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations joined together to develop more efficient processes and standards for exchanging and sharing data and metadata. The World Bank joined the initial group of sponsor organizations in 2003. The commitment of the sponsor organizations to the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) initiative was reinforced in 2007 through a memorandum of understanding, which established an SDMX secretariat and set the framework for the creation of two working groups: the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange Technical Standards Working Group and the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange Statistical Working Group.

2. The aim of the SDMX initiative is to create and maintain technical and statistical standards and guidelines, together with an information technology architecture and tools, to be used and implemented by the SDMX sponsors and other organizations dealing with SDMX. Combined with modern information technology, these SDMX standards and guidelines should improve the efficiency when managing statistical business processes. After more than 10 years of SDMX experience, the SDMX standards and guidelines are mature enough to be broadly implemented in different statistical domains and globally by statistical organizations.

3. The Statistical Commission has received SDMX progress reports since 2002. The Statistical Commission recognized and supported the SDMX standards and guidelines in 2008 as the preferred standard for the exchange and sharing of data and metadata, requesting the SDMX sponsors to continue their work and to encourage national and international statistical organizations to increase the use and implementation of SDMX.

II. New developments

4. The Working Group on Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange for Sustainable Development Goal Indicators was established by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators with the mandate to develop a solution for the exchange and dissemination of indicator data and metadata. The Working Group released the first draft data structure definition for the indicators in February 2018. SDMX data exchange of the indicators was subsequently piloted from March to September 2018, with the participation of five countries and five international agencies. Taking into account the findings of the pilot and general guidance on data disaggregation from the Inter-Agency and Expert Group, the Working Group is planning to release the first official data structure definition by March 2019. A draft metadata structure definition is expected to be released at the same time.

5. An inter-agency working group comprised of Eurostat, the International Trade Centre, OECD, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, with the latter acting as the secretariat and chair of the working group, was established in 2013 to support the implementation of SDMX standards in international merchandise trade statistics. After releasing version 1.0 of the implementation of SDMX standards in international merchandise trade statistics in 2016, the working group further improved the data structure in 2018, taking into

account results of pilot implementation projects in Mexico and Morocco, which were completed in the second half of 2017. The objectives of those pilot projects were to apply version 1.0 in a national context, identify implementation challenges and prepare recommendations for amendment to version 1.1. The working group plans to submit the most recent version of the data structure definition to the SDMX secretariat for review, with an endorsement by the SDMX sponsors expected early in 2019.

6. Following the implementation of SDMX for the exchange of macroeconomic statistics in the national accounts, balance of payments and foreign direct investment domains, the development of a global SDMX framework for price statistics became a priority. The first version of a global data structure definition for consumer price indices was officially published in 2018, and implementation is scheduled to begin in 2019.

7. A project on the implementation of SDMX for the global exchange of education statistics is under way. The project involves Eurostat, OECD and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. The data structures are expected to be published over the course of 2019.

III. Ongoing statistical and technical work

8. The European Central Bank Statistics Committee created the Task Force on the Development of Shared Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange Tools with the objective of fostering the collaboration and sharing of SDMX software tools primarily within the European System of Central Banks. The Task Force intends to provide tangible benefits for central banks in terms of supporting development efficiencies, increased analytical functionality, information-sharing and the establishment of a visible and accessible support network. The Task Force monitors the continuously evolving landscape of software that is built to deal with SDMX, collecting key information relating to the tools' features, quality and support and, on the basis of this information, identifies those that are most likely to be efficiently used by central banks and to promote awareness of the benefits of their usage. To this end, the Task Force maintains a relationship with other SDMX software development communities. The European Central Bank also continues to support the SDMX Global Registry and the SDMX website.

9. IMF has continued to facilitate data-sharing through assisting national authorities in the implementation of National Summary Data Pages for its data dissemination standards and through the Task Force on International Data Cooperation.

10. The Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange Technical Standards Working Group and the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange Statistical Working Group are responsible for the management and enhancement of SDMX technical and statistical standards and the related SDMX information technology applications. The Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange Statistical Working Group has been working on a number of improvements to the standards, including the business case for SDMX, a new version of the SDMX glossary, the global metadata concept scheme, based on the glossary, the checklist for the design of SDMX projects and a number of cross-domain code lists.

11. The Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange Technical Standards Working Group has worked to deliver a number of technical improvements, namely, the following:

(a) SDMX-JSON format, oriented to data discovery and visualization on the Internet, has been updated for performance improvement;

(b) SDMX-CSV format has been published. This lightweight format improves the interoperability of the standard and makes it possible to easily import SDMX flows into commonly used software tools. Thanks to the optimization of the representation of information, it paves the way for using SDMX for the exchange of large volumes of aggregated statistics and microdata;

(c) SDMX RESTful application programming interface has been updated. Version 1.3.0 is now available with several new features and other improvements that facilitate the optimization of computational and communication resources;

(d) Much effort has been invested in the enhancement of the information model in order to, among other features, enable support for multiple measures and improve the versioning of code lists that will help to simplify the maintenance of data structure definitions and other artefacts and keep them in sync in fast-changing data exchange environments;

(e) A test compatibility kit to validate the conformance of SDMX software implementations is under development.

12. The Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange Technical Standards Working Group continued its work on the development of the Validation and Transformation Language (VTL). VTL can be used in conjunction with SDMX to express and share validation and transformation rules applicable to data. New technical specifications for VTL 2.0 were published in July 2018.

13. In the context of international data cooperation for macroeconomic statistics, the use of pull techniques supported by web services was piloted over the course of 2017 and 2018. The ultimate objective of this initiative is to improve and further the automation of statistical data exchange.

14. Further work is under way on new features that will be incorporated into SDMX 3.0, VTL, support for microdata exchange and geo-referencing capabilities, among others.

IV. Capacity-building

15. With the spread of the SDMX standard, the demand for capacity-building activities has been growing in recent years. In the light of this, the SDMX secretariat concluded that an increase in capacity-building coordination among the sponsor organizations was needed. The secretariat is therefore developing a global capacity-building framework, a first draft of which was discussed at the 2018 SDMX Expert Group Meeting.

16. Eurostat has set up regular courses on SDMX for both beginners and information technology developers. While the courses target European Union member States, they are also open to participants from other countries. In the framework of its international cooperation activities, Eurostat has also financed SDMX capacity-building activities in South America, North Africa and Eastern Europe. Eurostat also maintains the SDMX InfoSpace, which provides access to information in three languages (English, French and German) about the SDMX standard, the SDMX tools developed by Eurostat, upcoming training initiatives and the progress of SDMX implementation in the European Statistical System.

17. The Division has carried out a number of capacity-building activities in several areas, including the Sustainable Development Goal indicators and international merchandise trade statistics. With regard to the Goals, the Division is running a project, funded by the Department for International Development, which is establishing SDMX-based data and metadata exchange with 20 countries in Africa

and Asia. Technical assistance has been provided to two countries that have already successfully established a pilot data exchange of the Goal indicators. Capacity development in data-sharing and metadata-sharing has been provided to all 20 countries. As part of another large-scale initiative, namely, the United Nations Development Account tenth tranche, the Division has co-organized with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Economic Commission for Europe the first two workshops on SDMX-based data-sharing and metadata-sharing. The Division will continue to work with all the regional commissions to complete the planned capacity-building programme on data and metadata exchange. With respect to international merchandise trade statistics, the Division and the African Union Commission conducted the first in a series of training workshops on SDMX and those statistics in September 2018. Similar technical assistance activities are planned in 2019.

V. Software tools and applications

18. Eurostat has continued to upgrade the SDMX tools that it develops and maintains. In particular, its SDMX converter and SDMX structural validation services have extended their support of various formats such as Excel, fixed-length record formats and SDMX-CSV, while its Euro-SDMX registry has improved its support of more experimental SDMX features such as structure sets and data registrations. Moreover, several technical improvements were made to the Eurostat SDMX reference infrastructure, which provides a set of reusable modules that organizations can use to expose their data through SDMX web services. The Eurostat tools are available as open source.

19. Fusion Registry is a fully-fledged SDMX registry supported by the Bank for International Settlements. The governance of Fusion Registry has been modified to allow for a freely available community edition and an extended commercial edition. The community edition supports the standard application programming interfaces, comes with an enhanced interface and enables the management of all SDMX structural metadata and data validation and transformation. Furthermore, a metadata-driven feature was added that supports the creation, ingestion, validation and transformation of Excel templates for reporting data, thus lowering the entry barrier for new or infrequent data reporters. The most relevant extensions of the commercial edition consist of management capabilities for the full SDMX information model, in particular data and metadata flows. The Bank remains committed to funding the maintenance of and improvements to the free community edition.

20. Since 2007, the Statistical Information System Collaboration Community, led by OECD, is a group of statistical organizations sharing similar strategic objectives that has pooled resources and ideas to innovate and produce a state-of-the-art digital solution in support of official statistics. This solution, the dot.Stat Suite, is an SDMX-based modular open source platform that enables the design of tailored data portals or lightweight reporting platforms in a fluid and agile manner. The product road map is aimed at progressively covering the full data cycle, enabling organizations to bring further value as trusted quality data producers, empowering them with quality assurance by design and advanced workflow and reporting mechanisms, high performance calculation and import and export tasks to enable efficiency gains and improved quality of user experience in data operations. The Collaboration Community also works in close partnership with Eurostat to enable the reuse of open source and common modules from the SDMX reference infrastructure package. The dot.Stat Suite is developed under a continuous user-driven product delivery model, with a beta version delivered at the end of 2017 and a production-ready version scheduled for early in 2019.

VI. Events

21. The sixth SDMX Global Conference was held in Addis Ababa from 2 to 5 October 2017. The conference was jointly hosted by ECA and the African Development Bank, with support from the SDMX sponsor agencies. A two-day conference was followed by a two-day capacity-building session. The presentations and discussions at the Global Conference highlighted two important recent developments in the SDMX world. First, SDMX implementation has now spread beyond the borders of advanced economies: there have been a high number of successful SDMX projects in the developing world that have shown that SDMX has the potential to be a truly global standard. Second, SDMX has begun to attract interest and investment from the private sector: the industry, which participated for the first time in the event, identified SDMX as an ambitious, powerful and versatile standard that has the potential to modernize statistical production systems. The event was attended by more than 260 participants from more than 90 countries, including all 54 African countries.

22. The 2018 Workshop of the Expert Group on Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange was held in Paris from 22 to 25 October 2018 at OECD. The meeting brought together more than 60 experts from international agencies, governments and the private sector, and had a forward-looking agenda, in which participants evaluated statistical modelling issues and looked at the technology and evolution of related standards and software tools and the capacity-building material available. The meeting also saw a review of recent improvements and helped to further the development of a new version of SDMX.

23. The seventh SDMX Global Conference will be held in Budapest on 16 and 17 September 2019, followed by a capacity-building session on 18 and 19 September. The Global Conference will be hosted by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office. Its programme is currently under preparation.

VII. Action required by the Statistical Commission

24. The Statistical Commission is invited to take note of the present report.

Report of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities

I. Introduction

1. The Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities is an inter-agency body that promotes coordination and cooperation across statistical programmes in regional, supranational and international organizations. As a forum of committed members, it fosters good practices in the statistical activities of international organizations, in accordance with the principles governing international statistical activities, and within the constraints of their own governance arrangements and resource envelopes. The members of the Committee are committed to contributing actively to the development of a coordinated global statistical system that produces and disseminates high-quality statistics, for example by facilitating the development and effective functioning of regional and national statistical systems.

2. The Committee held two sessions in 2018: the thirty-first session, held in New York on 5 March 2018, prior to the forty-ninth session of the Statistical Commission; and the thirty-second session, hosted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Vienna on 25 and 26 September 2018. Both sessions were chaired by the Co-Chairs of the Committee: the Chief Statistician and Director of Statistics and Data of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Martine Durand, and the Chief of the Research and Trend Analysis Branch of UNODC, Angela Me.

3. The present report provides an overview of the work carried out by the Committee in 2018 and a summary of the main conclusions that it reached at its thirty-first and thirty-second sessions.

II. Membership, leadership and terms of reference

4. The Committee currently has 45 members,[1] 38 of which attended at least one session in 2018.

5. In addition to the two Co-Chairs, the work of the Committee is also supported by three Vice-Chairs: the Director General of Eurostat, Mariana Kotzeva, the Director of the African Centre for Statistics at the Economic Commission for Africa, Oliver Chinganya, and the Director General of the Statistical Centre for the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, Sabir Al Harbi.

III. Working methods

6. In addition to holding two annual sessions, the Committee operates actively between sessions through a network of task teams, following up on the decisions taken during the regular sessions. The teams choose their own working arrangements and hold their own meetings, as appropriate. They prepare documents on progress made and the results of their work and report to the Committee for decision-making at its regular sessions. As the secretariat of the Committee, the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat works closely with the Bureau, facilitates communication among Committee members and prepares the

[1] See http://unstats.un.org/unsd/accsub-public/members.htm.

reports of the regular sessions and the annual report to the Statistical Commission; it also maintains the web page of the Committee on the Division website.[2]

7. Since the forty-fourth session of the Statistical Commission, the Committee has developed joint statements on items on the agenda of the Commission that are important to the Committee. Such statements must receive strong support from Committee members in order to serve as a mandate for the Co-Chairs to speak on behalf of the Committee. As in recent years, the first session of the year (the thirty-first session of the Committee), which was held on the margins of the Statistical Commission session in March 2018, was largely devoted to finalizing the Committee's joint statements, which were delivered by the Co-Chairs at the forty-ninth session of the Commission, in 2018.[3] The Committee is also planning to deliver joint statements at the fiftieth session of the Commission.

8. The Committee has developed a multi-year work programme based on the results of a survey conducted on priority topics for coordination and/or sharing of experiences among members. The Committee is committed to translating work areas and discussions into specific outputs (publications, papers and websites) in order to increase the impact and visibility of its work.

IV. Work of the Committee in 2018

A. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

9. Issues surrounding the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development have been on the agenda of the Committee at every session since its twentieth, which was held in Frankfurt, Germany, during the fourth quarter of 2012.

10. The Committee continued to receive regular briefings from the Statistics Division on the further development of the indicator framework for monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals, in view of the critical supporting role of international organizations as custodians of indicators in their respective areas of work and in view of their respective mandates in monitoring the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In 2017, the Committee had developed and transmitted to the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators a document outlining the guiding principles of data reporting and data sharing for the global monitoring of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (version 1) (see also E/CN.3/2018/2, para. 17). Through that document, Committee members had indicated their commitment to achieving the highest statistical standards in reporting on the Goals, in particular with regard to accuracy, comparability and transparency, and to discussing with national authorities any concerns that a country may have within the framework of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and the principles governing international statistical activities. The document was welcomed by the Statistical Commission in March 2018 as an initial step to improve coordination and harmonization and to ensure transparency (see Commission decision 49/101 (f)).

11. Subsequently, the Co-Chairs of the Committee engaged in extensive negotiations (jointly with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Labour Organization) with a subgroup of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group to finalize together the criteria for the implementation of the guidelines on data

[2] http://unstats.un.org/unsd/accsub-public/workpartner_ccsa.htm.

[3] In 2018, joint statements were delivered under the following agenda items: 3 (a), "Data and indicators for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (2 statements); 3 (b), "Handbook of Statistical Organization"; and 3 (d), "Household surveys".

flows and global data reporting for the Sustainable Development Goals submitted to the Commission by the Group in March 2018. The negotiation process resulted in the document containing the criteria. That document was endorsed by the Committee at its thirty-second session and subsequently by the Group, with minor changes, at its meeting held in Stockholm from 5 to 8 November 2018 and has been presented to the Commission by the Group (see E/CN.3/2019/2, sect. II.B and annex I).

12. Given the crucial importance of population data in computing many Sustainable Development Goal indicators, the Committee formed a task team to review the use of population data for the global monitoring of the Goals, as such data are one of the main sources of differences between Goal indicators published by custodian agencies and national indicators. The task team will assess the best practices in choosing the most appropriate population data for calculating Goal indicators and for producing regional and global aggregates. The task team will submit a preliminary report to the Committee prior to its next session, in early 2019. The task team consists of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), UNICEF, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and UNFPA and is led by UNDP.

13. The Committee continues to address issues related to country consultations for the global monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular how to conduct the consultation in a cost-effective, inclusive, informative and transparent way. The Committee will consider this topic at its 2019 sessions.

14. The Committee also regularly discusses the role of regional commissions in Sustainable Development Goal monitoring.

15. The Committee also continued to be briefed on the work of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

B. Capacity development and training

16. The Committee continues to share experiences in important areas. In 2018, the Committee held a panel discussion on the topic of capacity development and training. The Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century, the World Bank and the Statistics Division informed the Committee of recent development in this area. The Partnership presented its work on a feasibility study towards the creation of a global fund for data for development, the World Bank presented its activities regarding various funding mechanisms for the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Division informed the Committee on the work on financing by the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Committee exchanged views on issues regarding funding for statistical development.

17. The Committee presents on its website materials and tools for strengthening training and human resources development among national and international statistical agencies. The information set out on the website is based on early initiatives to coordinate training activities within the Committee.[4] The Committee continues to be involved in matters of statistical training and supports the establishment of a global network of regional training centres (see E/CN.3/2017/28, E/CN.3/2018/3 and E/CN.3/2019/3).

[4] See http://unstats.un.org/unsd/accsub-public/ccsa_training/ccsa_training_resources.htm.

C. Peer reviews of international statistical programmes

18. At the Committee's thirty-second session, UNODC presented the professional peer review of the UNODC research function carried out in 2017 and 2018 with the Statistics Division as part of the review team. In this context, the importance of the United Nations Statistics Quality Assurance Framework, developed by the Committee of the Chief Statisticians of the United Nations System, was emphasized. The Committee also recalled the survey on the implementation of the principles governing international statistical activities conducted in 2014.[5]

19. Consequently, the Committee decided to look further into the possibility of creating a peer review mechanism. The Committee welcomed the offer of UNODC to draft a brief concept note for the upcoming session of the Committee. In 2019, the Committee will also decide whether to repeat the survey on the implementation of the principles to assess the progress made by Committee members in this respect since 2014.

D. Open data policies

20. The Committee held initial discussions on open data policies at its thirtieth session and decided to establish a task team, led by the World Bank, that would, inter alia, conduct a survey among Committee members regarding their current open data practices. At its thirty-second session, in September 2018, the Committee discussed the results of the task team's assessment of Committee members' use of open data practices.

21. The Committee requested the task team to document existing practices, to further reflect on how experiences with open data can be shared both among members and publicly. It also requested the task team to link its work to existing work and to develop an aspirational target for open data policies for Committee members. The task team also agreed to draft a public statement on such a target before the upcoming session. The Committee will again consider the topic of open data policies at its 2019 sessions to review the progress of the task team and to decide when to repeat the assessment.

E. Geospatial information for statistics

22. The Committee organized a special session on geospatial information for statistics, which provided an opportunity for members to share their activities on the uses of geospatial information systems. The session featured a wide variety of presentations by the Statistics Division, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, UNODC, ESCAP and FAO.

23. The Committee decided to conduct a stocktaking exercise to identify in each application area (e.g. sampling design and area frames; land cover/land-use mapping; validation of survey data; disaggregation of national data; data dissemination) the reference data sets and tools being used, how data are being disseminated, and experiences in capacity-building activities and in building partnerships. The exercise should describe the current situation but also be forward-looking and assess challenges, needs and organizations' plans or visions for the use of geospatial information. The results will form the basis for a decision by the Committee on the areas in which it might be useful for Committee members to coordinate and create a

[5] See https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ccsa/documents/SA-2014-8-Survey.pdf.

common platform, including for meaningful engagement with the geospatial community. The Bureau will conduct the member survey and report the results to the Committee at its next session, in March 2019. Task teams could then be created to take the work forward in areas to be decided, based on the survey results.

24. The Committee also agreed to establish contact with the United Nations system network on geospatial information. This will be facilitated by the Statistics Division, which serves as the secretariat of both bodies.

F. Publications by the Committee

26. The Committee publishes on its website various outputs, including the special issue paper entitled "Case studies: using non-official sources in international statistics" (September 2016),[6] which complements a paper entitled "Recommended practices on the use of non-official sources in international statistics" (November 2013).[7] Other publications, as well as the Global Inventory of Statistical Standards, are available on the Committee's website,[8] which is hosted by the Statistics Division.

G. Committee presence at international conferences

27. The Committee organized a special session during the conference of the International Association for Official Statistics held in Paris from 19 to 21 September 2018, on the theme "International statistics: beyond the simple collation of national official statistics". The presentations are available on the Committee website.[9] The Committee will also organize a special session on geospatial information for international statistics at the International Statistical Institute World Statistics Congress to be held from 18 to 23 August 2019 in Kuala Lumpur.

H. 2019 sessions

28. The Committee agreed that its thirty-third session would be held in New York on 4 March 2019, in conjunction with the fiftieth session of the Statistical Commission. The thirty-fourth session will be held in Copenhagen, to be hosted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, during the fourth quarter of 2019.

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[6] Available at http://unstats.un.org/unsd/accsub/2016docs-28th/E-publication.pdf.

[7] Available at http://unstats.un.org/unsd/accsub-public/practices.pdf.

[8] http://unstats.un.org/unsd/accsub-public/workpartner_ccsa.htm.

[9] https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ccsa/iaos/2018/.

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Items for information: integration of statistical and geospatial information

Report of the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2018/227 and past practices, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit herewith the report of the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information. In its report, the Expert Group summarizes the activities it has undertaken since the forty-ninth session of the Statistical Commission, in accordance with Commission decision 49/121. The work of the Expert Group has focused on the further elaboration of the five principles of the global statistical geospatial framework and its role in supporting the wide range of implementation and adoption activities with respect to the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2020 round of population censuses. An early draft of the five principles of the global statistical geospatial framework will be discussed at a side event on the margins of the fiftieth session of the Statistical Commission. The Expert Group additionally reviews its short- and longer-term statistical-geospatial interoperability projects, and the establishment of relationships with other relevant experts and processes within other areas of relevance, including disaster- and climate-related statistics. The Commission is invited to take note of the progress of the Expert Group in the elaboration of the five principles of the global statistical geospatial framework, the implementation of the framework and the progress of the Expert Group in the promotion and coordination of activities in the area of integration of statistical and geospatial information.

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Report of the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information

I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to Statistical Commission decision 44/101, the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information comprises members of both the statistical and the geospatial professional communities of Member States and relevant international organizations. Since its establishment in 2013, the Expert Group has reported to both the Statistical Commission and the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management at each of their respective annual sessions.

2. The overall objectives and functions of the Expert Group are to pursue the implementation of the global statistical geospatial framework and its application towards the 2020 round of censuses with the understanding that it would apply to other initiatives, including other censuses, such as agriculture and economic censuses, and to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Additionally, pursuant to decision 48/108, the mandate of the Expert Group was strengthened for it to become the overall coordination group for all activities in the area of the integration of statistics and geospatial information.

3. In the present report, the Expert Group summarizes the activities it has undertaken since the forty-ninth session of the Commission, including the decisions emanating from the eighth session of the Committee of Experts in New York in August 2018 and the main outcomes of its fifth meeting of the Expert Group, held in Deqing, China, in November 2018 on the margins of the United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress. The Expert Group has reviewed and consolidated its progress towards the elaboration of the five principles of the global statistical geospatial framework, reviewed regional efforts with regard to the promotion, adoption and capacity-building activities relating to the framework and considered how the statistical-geospatial interoperability short- and longer-term projects can be completed. An early draft of the five principles of the framework will be discussed at a side event on the margins of the fiftieth session of the Statistical Commission. The Commission is invited to take note of the progress made by the Expert Group in the area of integration of statistical and geospatial information.

II. Eighth session of the Committee of Experts

4. In its decision 8/108, adopted in August 2018, the Committee of Experts noted the valuable progress being made to further elaborate on the global statistical geospatial framework through its five principle task teams and endorsed the short- and longer-term statistical-geospatial interoperability projects first presented to the Commission at its forty-ninth session. Through the paper entitled "Global statistical geospatial framework: linking statistics and place",[1] provided as a background document to its report to the Committee of Experts, the Expert Group presented the current status and plans for the framework and identified case studies in which Australia, Egypt, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa and Sweden had reported lessons learned from implementation of the framework.

5. The Committee of Experts supported the direction of and six key areas of focus for the current activities of the Expert Group: (a) increasing the engagement of the geospatial community within the work programme of the Expert Group;

[1] Available from http://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/8th-Session/documents/Global-Statistical-Geospatial-Framework-July-2018.pdf.

(b) elaborating the five principles of the global statistical geospatial framework; (c) implementing the short- and longer-term statistical-geospatial interoperability projects;[2] (d) promoting the adoption of the global statistical geospatial framework; (e) promoting capacity development activities that support and enable the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the 2020 round of population and housing censuses; and (f) supporting the broadened scope of the Expert Group as the overall coordination group for all activities relating to the integration of statistical and geospatial information. Accordingly, the Expert Group is now considering the further implementation of the global statistical geospatial framework.

6. The Committee of Experts encouraged the Expert Group to continue to work with the proposed statistical domain working group of the Open Geospatial Consortium,[3] noting that interoperability projects proposed by the Expert Group reflected the direct collaboration and partnership between the statistical and geospatial communities. The Committee also encouraged the Expert Group to consider establishing relationships with other relevant experts and processes, including in the domains of disaster and climate change statistics.

7. On the margins of the eighth session of the Committee of Experts, the Expert Group convened a side event on the integration of statistical and geospatial information. This enabled the further promotion and understanding of the global statistical geospatial framework and integrating the broader work programme of the Expert Group within the geospatial community.

8. In a related area, by its decision 8/113, the Committee of Experts adopted the integrated geospatial information framework,[4] jointly developed by the United Nations and the World Bank, as an overarching strategic policy guide for Member States to reference when developing and strengthening their national and subnational geospatial information management systems and capabilities. The integrated geospatial information framework can provide an enabling mechanism for the strengthening of geospatial information management and capacity in Member States and, by extension, support statistical-geospatial interoperability and integration. The integrated geospatial information framework comprises three separate but interconnected documents: an overarching strategic framework; an implementation guide; and country-level action plans. The overarching strategic framework is composed of seven underpinning principles, eight goals and nine strategic pathways as a means for Governments to establish more effective geospatial information-management practices and policies. This high-level framework will act as an enabler for the further adoption and implementation of the global statistical geospatial framework, through strengthening the capacity of national geospatial information agencies, alongside existing frameworks and programmes that strengthen the capacity of national statistical offices.

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[2] These projects are derived from recommendations developed at the Workshop on Integrating Geospatial and Statistical Standards, convened jointly by the Economic Commission for Europe and the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe, and endorsed by the Committee of Experts at its eighth session (see http://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/8th-Session/documents/E-C20-2018-11-Add_1_Integration_of_geospatial_statistical_and_other_related_information.pdf).

[3] The Open Geospatial Consortium is an international not-for-profit organization committed to making quality open standards for the global geospatial community. These standards are made through a consensus process and are freely available from www.opengeospatial.org for anyone to use to improve sharing of the world's geospatial data.

[4] Available from http://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/8th-Session/documents/Part%201-IGIF-Overarching-Strategic-Framework-24July2018.pdf.

III. Development of the global sta istical geospatial framework

9. The global statistical geospatial framework is a principles-based framework, endorsed by the Commission in its decision 48/108 in 2017 and adopted by the Committee of Experts in its decision 6/107 in 2016. At its fourth meeting, held in Stockholm in November 2017, the Expert Group formed task teams for each of the five principles of the framework, with each task team responsible for the elaboration of the corresponding principle. The task teams were led by two Expert Group members and augmented by other members as required. Each task team led the elaboration of its principle, with broad consultation across the Expert Group, through regular online conference discussions as and when required. Following its fifth meeting, the Expert Group established an editorial group to develop a consolidated paper on the elaborated principles in preparation for global consultation.

10. The five principles of the global statistical geospatial framework and updates from the principle task teams are set out below.

Principle 1
Use of fundamental geospatial infrastructure and ge coding

11. Developed by Mexico and Germany, this principle focuses on creating infrastructure that enables statistical-geospatial interoperability. This infrastructure supports the creation and provision of high-quality, standardized physical addresses, or property or building identifiers (or any other location elements), which allows the assignment of precise coordinates or grid references. The addition of a time and date stamp also places the unit in both time and space.

Principle 2
Geocoded unit record data in a data management environment

12. Developed by Australia and Sweden and using the infrastructure from principle 1, this principle supports the linking of each statistical unit record to a geographic reference (e.g. a coordinate or small geographic area) that will allow for statistics to be applied to any geographic context. This will support integration or linkage of data from other data sources and mitigate challenges that arise with new geographies or changes in existing geographies.

Principle 3
Common geographies for the dissemination of statistics

13. Developed by Poland and Canada, this principle determines the definitions of geographic regions and aggregation/disaggregation of data to regions. A common set of geographies will ensure that statistical data are geospatially enabled in a consistent manner and are able to be integrated at an aggregate level, and that users can discover, access, integrate, analyse and visualize statistical information seamlessly in geographies of interest.

Principle 4
Statistical and geospatial interoperability (data, standards, processes and organizations)

14. Developed by Eurostat and the Economic Commission for Europe, this principle enables greater standardization and interpretability of data, which will lead to improved efficiency and simplification in the creation, discovery, integration and use of geospatially enabled statistics and geospatial data. It also increases the potential application of a larger range of data and technologies, thereby enabling a wider range of information to be available and accessible for use in decision-making.

Principle 5
Accessible and usable geospatially enabled statistics

15. Developed by the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, this principle supports data custodians in the release of data with confidence, improves the discovery of and access to geospatially enabled statistics, particularly through promoting web services to provide machine-readable and dynamic linkage to data, and supports analysis and evaluation of data in decision-making.

IV. Fifth meeting of the Expert Group

16. The fifth meeting of the Expert Group was held in Deqing, China, on 22 and 23 November 2018, on the margins of the United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress, and hosted by the Government of China, through the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Zhejiang provincial government.

17. The primary objective of the Expert Group meeting was to finalize the work of the task teams in their elaboration of the five principles of the global statistical geospatial framework, review the outcomes of the recent sessions of the Statistical Commission and the Committee of Experts, review the integrated geospatial information framework and discuss the progression of the Expert Group's efforts with regard to the 2030 Agenda, the 2020 round of censuses and other integration activities related to statistical and geospatial information. The meeting was attended by 21 participants from 13 countries (Australia, Brazil, China, Egypt, Germany, Kuwait, Mexico, Oman, Poland, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda and the United Kingdom), five regional and international organizations (Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, Department of Field Support, United Nations Population Fund, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, and Economic Commission for Africa) and representatives from the private sector network of the Committee of Experts.

18. Prior to the formal meeting of the Expert Group, members participated in the United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress, organizing a session on statistical-geospatial integration for the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2020 censuses. The session examined the benefits emerging from enhancing the geospatial interoperability of statistical, administrative and geospatial datasets and enabled by the global statistical geospatial framework and other developments. The session also discussed the challenges that national, regional and international data users and producers faced in integrating statistical, administrative and geospatial datasets to generate insights and inform decision-making. The session provided an opportunity to further promote the global statistical geospatial framework and reiterate the message aimed at building a combined and integrated statistical-geospatial community. The session also noted the emerging opportunity that earth observations provided to support the derivation and generation of statistics and urged national statistical offices to consider how to take advantage of that opportunity.

19. At its formal meeting, the Expert Group received presentations regarding the development of regional work in Africa, Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean. These presentations demonstrated that there was considerable progress being made in the development, implementation and integration of the global statistical geospatial framework at the regional level. During the ensuing discussions, it was noted that regional cross-fertilization could also lead to the distillation of good practices and opportunities, along with the further development of capacity across regions. Accordingly, the Expert Group strongly encouraged collaboration and cooperation across and within regions to share experiences and support the promotion

of statistical-geospatial integration activities, particularly in facilitating implementation of the global statistical geospatial framework.

20. The Expert Group considered progress made since its fourth meeting with regard to statistical-geospatial interoperability. This included efforts to promote and establish the statistical domain working group by the Open Geospatial Consortium, an international geospatial standards body. This working group will identify requirements and use cases demonstrating how geospatial and statistical standards can support the integration of geospatial information into statistical systems for the purposes of broad discovery, analysis and use. It will then look at mechanisms to develop or adapt appropriate standards and models to support these requirements. The need for the working group to draw its membership from both the statistical and the geospatial communities was recognized; it will be open to both members and non-members of the Open Geospatial Consortium in order to establish an effective programme of work. The statistical domain working group and the Expert Group plan to co-host a meeting during 2019 to establish and begin the programme of work. The Expert Group strongly encourages active participation by the statistical community.

21. The Expert Group reiterated its appreciation of the voluntary efforts of its members and encouraged continued commitment to participating fully in its activities, underlining the value of those contributions in making effective progress on the desired programme of work endorsed by the Commission and Committee of Experts. The Expert Group requested that further contributions by its members be made in both technical and practical ways, for example, the translation of documents. The Expert Group requested the Secretariat and other stakeholders to investigate resourcing opportunities to support its programme of work.

22. To expand on its promotion and communications work, the Expert Group has implemented a wiki. This will document the Expert Group's reports, outputs and case studies of implementation of the global statistical geospatial framework and other related statistical-geospatial studies and papers. The Expert Group asked whether the Secretariat could consider developing a governance model for the use of the wiki that would foster the dissemination of information to Member States and the public, as well as enable a collaboration space for the Expert Group to develop its various outputs.

23. The Expert Group discussed the relevance of the integrated geospatial information framework, concluding that there was a strong enabling opportunity for that framework to support the implementation of the global statistical geospatial framework and statistical-geospatial integration more broadly. In the ensuing discussion, it was noted that there was a strong need to provide common vocabularies and definitions of terminologies across statistical and geospatial communities. That would further enhance integration and interoperability efforts among those communities, facilitating steps towards an integrated statistical-geospatial community.

24. Discussions on statistical-geospatial integration subsequently focused on the fundamental data needs of both national statistical offices and national mapping/geospatial information agencies. The global fundamental geospatial data

themes[5] are essential to supporting principle 1 (use of fundamental geospatial infrastructure and geocoding) of the global statistical geospatial framework and to providing national statistical offices and national mapping/geospatial information agencies with the geospatial datasets that can enable statistical-geospatial integration. The Expert Group noted the natural tension between these institutions: a national statistical office will often prefer consistent geographies (such as grids or stable statistical geographies) while national mapping/geospatial information agencies prefer geographies conforming to administrative divisions.

25. Noting the good progress in the elaboration of the five principles of the global statistical geospatial framework, the Expert Group has set an objective of those principles being completed for adoption by the Committee of Experts at its ninth session, in August 2019, and subsequent endorsement by the Statistical Commission at its fifty-first session, in 2020. It is anticipated that a global consultation on the framework, inclusive of the elaborated principles, will occur during the second and third quarters of 2019. An early draft of the five principles will be discussed at a side event on the margins of the fiftieth session of the Statistical Commission. It is worth noting that the framework is to be considered a living document, and therefore will be maintained on a regular basis to reflect updates and progress in the domain of statistical-geospatial integration.

26. In considering the progress and expansion of the Expert Group's work programme, the Expert Group has made significant progress in the elaboration of the five principles, which will be completed in 2019. Nevertheless, the recent enhanced mandate of the Expert Group, as the overall coordination group for all activities relating to the integration of statistical and geospatial information, has meant that items within its work programme are constrained owing to sufficient resources not being available within the Expert Group. Such items include those pertaining to the short- and longer-term statistical-geospatial interoperability project recommendations presented in its report to the Commission in 2017. Accordingly, the Expert Group seeks enhanced resourcing and participation from Member States in order to better deliver on its mandate and support the 2020 round of censuses and the 2030 Agenda in a timely and effective manner.

V. Conclusion and the way forward

27. In adopting decision 8/108 in August 2018, the Committee of Experts acknowledged the broader need for statistical and geospatial integration, endorsed the short- and longer-term statistical-geospatial interoperability projects and supported the elaboration of the five principles of the global statistical geospatial framework. An early draft of the five principles will be discussed at a side event on the margins of the fiftieth session of the Statistical Commission.

28. The Expert Group has set the objective of providing the completed framework, inclusive of the elaborated principles, to the Committee of Experts at its ninth session,

[5] The 14 fundamental global geospatial data themes are as follows: (a) global geodetic reference framework; (b) addresses; (c) buildings and settlements; (d) elevation and depth; (e) functional areas; (f) geographical names; (g) geology and soils; (h) land cover and land use; (i) land parcels; (j) orthoimagery; (k) physical infrastructure; (l) population distribution; (m) transport network; and (n) water. These themes are considered to be fundamental with regard to the establishment of a country's geospatial infrastructure and have great relevant and potential impact on the statistical community when building capacity and statistical-geospatial interoperability. They were adopted by the Committee of Experts in its decision 7/104. The full list of themes and their full descriptions are available from http://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/8th-Session/documents/E-C20-2018-7-Add_1-Global-fundamental-geospatial-data-themes.pdf.

in August 2019, and to the Commission at its fifty-first session, in 2020, following an anticipated global consultation. The Expert Group will review and revise the framework on a continual basis. This will ensure that the Expert Group can optimize its resources in the development of the framework and be responsive to new developments and innovations, and ensure that the framework remains relevant for Member States. This includes the provision of definitions and vocabularies that clarify and support statistical-geospatial integration. To deliver this enhanced work programme, the Expert Group is seeking greater resourcing and participation to amplify its capacity to deliver its work programme, including its short- and longer-term statistical-geospatial interoperability project recommendations.

29. Through the efforts of the Expert Group, the Committee of Experts is continuing to work with the Statistical Commission to expand upon the global statistical geospatial framework as a globally consistent mechanism for enabling the integration of statistical and geospatial information.

VI. Recommended action required by the Statistical Commission

30. The Commission is invited to take note of the report of the Expert Group, including its progress towards elaborating the five principles of the global statistical geospatial framework and the broader ongoing work to ensure the integration of statistical and geospatial information for Member States and the international community.

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Items for information: follow-up to the policy decisions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council

Policy decisions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council that are relevant to the work of the Statistical Commission

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, which was prepared in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2018/227 and past practices, provides an overview of the policy decisions adopted by the General Assembly and the Council in 2018, or earlier, that are relevant to the work of the Statistical Commission. The action taken or proposed by the Commission and the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat in response to the requests made by the Assembly and the Council is also highlighted. The Commission is invited to take note of the report.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report was prepared in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2018/227 and past practices. It provides an overview of the policy decisions adopted by the General Assembly and the Council in 2018, or earlier, that are relevant to the work of the Statistical Commission. The action taken or proposed by the Commission and the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat in response to the requests made by the Assembly and the Council is also highlighted.

II. Enhancement of the statistical capacities of Member States with regard to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

A. Action requested by the General Assembly

2. In its resolution 72/228 on science, technology and innovation for development, the General Assembly encouraged enhanced capacity-building support for developing countries, including for African countries, the least developed countries, small island developing States, landlocked developing countries and middle-income countries, in order to generate the use of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by sex, age, geography, income, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, and further encouraged international cooperation, including through technical and financial support, to strengthen the capacity of national statistical authorities and bureaux. Subsequently, in its resolution 72/234 on women in development, the Assembly encouraged developed countries and relevant entities of the United Nations system to provide support and assistance to developing countries, upon their request, with respect to establishing, developing and strengthening their databases and information systems.

3. In addition, in its resolution 72/237 on South-South cooperation, the General Assembly invited the regional commissions to help to promote the enhancement of the data and statistical capacities of member States for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

4. In its resolution 72/310 on a New Partnership for Africa's Development, the General Assembly reiterated the need to support developing countries in strengthening the capacity of national statistical offices and data systems to ensure access to high-quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated data. In its resolution 2018/4 on the social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, the Economic and Social Council urged donor countries and organizations, including the United Nations system, and the international and regional statistical communities, to support African countries in strengthening statistical capacity in support of development. In its resolution 2018/23 on new strategic directions of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Council endorsed the new strategic directions and referred to the need for an effective data policy regime and architecture to support the implementation and monitoring of the development process in Africa, as captured in the 2030 Agenda and the African Union Agenda 2063, which will require resources and strengthened capacities for data collection, storage, access and analysis grounded in robust statistical systems.

5. In its resolution 72/217 on follow-up to and implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the General Assembly urged the

international community to support small island developing States in strengthening the capacity of national statistical offices and data systems, with a view to supporting the implementation, follow-up and review Samoa Pathway and the 2030 Agenda. In its resolution 72/232 on follow-up to the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, the Assembly also stressed the need to enhance capacity-building support for developing countries, including landlocked developing countries, and reaffirmed the commitment to strengthen the capacity of national statistical offices and data systems to ensure access to high-quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated data. With respect to development cooperation with middle-income countries, if reiterated, in its resolution 72/230 on development cooperation with middle-income countries, the commitment to intensify efforts to strengthen statistical capacities in developing countries, including middle-income countries.

6. In its resolution 72/228, the General Assembly took note of the launch of the United Nations World Data Forum, which sets out to improve the use of data for sustainable development, noting that the first Forum was hosted in Cape Town, South Africa, from 15 to 18 January 2017, and looked forward to the convening of the second, to be held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, in October 2018.

B. Action taken or proposed by the Statistical Commission and the Statistics Division

7. In its report (E/CN.3/2019/4), the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a summary of the recent activities of the Group, including: (a) preparation of a document on the implementation of the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data; (b) consultations on the establishment of a financing mechanism to support the implementation of the Global Action Plan and the launch of the outcome document of the second United Nations World Data Forum, held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 22 to 24 October 2018; (c) organization of the second United Nations World Data Forum; and (d) preparation of a document on a more efficient coordination of the United Nations statistical system.

8. In his report on statistical capacity development (E/CN.3/2019/28), the Secretary-General provides an overview of the recent activities undertaken by the Statistics Division in support of country efforts to strengthen national statistical capacity in order to better respond to the data challenges of the 2030 Agenda. He also provides updates on new and continuing collaborative efforts for synchronizing initiatives and leveraging partnerships and coordination in statistical capacity-building.

9. In its report (E/CN.3/2019/7) on statistical development in Asia and the Pacific, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) highlights five action areas prioritized by countries in the region to strengthen their national statistical capacity: engaging users and investing in statistics; ensuring the quality of and thereby building trust in statistics; using integrated statistics for comprehensive analysis; modernizing statistical business processes; and developing requisite skills sets. ESCAP reflects on the future strategic direction for Asia-Pacific collaboration on statistics in areas such as skills development through training partnerships, joint advocacy efforts for strengthened statistical systems, a greater focus on public-private partnerships, and innovation.

III. International cooperation to address and counter the world drug problem

A. Action requested by the General Assembly

10. In its resolution 72/198 on international cooperation to address and counter the world drug problem, the General Assembly invited Member States to promote and improve the systematic collection of information and gathering of evidence as well as the sharing, at the national and international levels, of reliable and comparable data on drug use and epidemiology, including on social, economic and other risk factors. It requested the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), in close cooperation with Member States and pertinent United Nations entities, intergovernmental and regional organizations and, when appropriate, the scientific community and civil society, to continue to support Member States, upon request, in strengthening their capacity to develop their reporting mechanisms, including by identifying gaps in the current drug statistics and by exploring possibilities to strengthen existing data-collection and analysis tools at the national level.

11. In the same resolution, the General Assembly also invited UNODC, in close cooperation with Member States, to reflect on possibilities for strengthening and streamlining its existing data-collection and analysis tools, including improving and strengthening the quality, response rate and effectiveness of the annual report questionnaire, and to report to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on possible ways to enhance those, for consideration by the Commission at its sixty-second session, and invited Member States to provide extrabudgetary resources for those purposes.

12. The General Assembly also welcomed Statistical Commission decision 48/110 on statistics on drugs and drug use (see E/2017/24, chap. I, sect. C), encouraged collaboration between the Statistical Commission and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, within their mandates, to exchange information on the latest data trends on the world drug problem, stressed the need for national statistical capacity-building to support Member States in improving the quality and availability of drug statistics and also to respond effectively to data collection requests from UNODC, and invited international and regional organizations to support Member States in that regard, upon their request.

13. In addition, the General Assembly invited Member States to invest in capacity-building and quality-enhancing activities for the collection and reporting of information, to participate in joint cooperation efforts aimed at the exchange of technical knowledge and practical experience in the collection, analysis and evaluation drug data, and to regularly report data and information relating to all aspects of the world drug problem to the Office through the annual report questionnaires. It also invited the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to strengthen the capacity of the Office to collect, analyse, use and disseminate accurate, reliable, objective and comparable data and to reflect such information in the World Drug Report. It encouraged Member States to promote data collection, research and the sharing of information, as well as the exchange of best practices on preventing and countering drug-related crime and on drug supply reduction measures and practices, and invited them to consider the need to review the set of national drug policy metrics and tools for the collection and analysis of accurate, reliable, disaggregated, comprehensive and comparable data to measure the effectiveness of programmes to address all relevant aspects of the world drug problem, including, as appropriate, as related to the 2030 Agenda.

B. Action taken or proposed by the Statistical Commission and the Statistics Division

14. In its report on crime and criminal justice statistics (E/CN.3/2019/19), UNODC reviews steps undertaken to implement the road map to improve statistics on drugs discussed by the Statistical Commission at its forty-eighth session, in 2017. In particular, UNODC indicates that it started a review of data collection tools and activities to support Member States in strengthening their capacity to produce and analyse drug statistics at the national level. In the report, UNODC also reviews activities, accomplishments and future challenges related to improving statistics on drugs and ways to further strengthen the collaboration between the Statistical Commission and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, including with regard to the revision process of the collection of international data on drugs.

IV. Disaster risk reduction and humanitarian assistance

A. Action requested by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council

15. In its resolution 72/218 on disaster risk reduction, the General Assembly recognized that disaster risk reduction required a multi-hazard approach and inclusive risk-informed decision-making based on the open exchange and dissemination of disaggregated data, including by sex, age and disability, as well as on easily accessible, up-to-date, comprehensible, science-based, non-sensitive risk information, complemented by traditional knowledge. In that regard, the Assembly encouraged States to commence or, as appropriate, further enhance the collection of data on disaster loss and other relevant disaster risk reduction targets, disaggregated by sex, age and disability, and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, and urged States to continue working on the development of baselines on current and historical disaster losses going back, at least, to 2005, if feasible.

16. In the same resolution, the General Assembly also welcomed the report of the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction (A/71/644 and A/71/644/Corr.1) and the establishment of common indicators and shared data sets to measure the global targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the disaster risk reduction targets of Sustainable Development Goals 1, 11 and 13, as an important contribution to ensure coherence, feasibility and consistency in implementation, collection of data and reporting. In that connection, the Assembly welcomed efforts to develop coherent metrics for reporting under the Sendai Framework, the Goals and other relevant instruments.

17. In its resolution 72/132 on international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, the General Assembly encouraged Member States, the United Nations, relevant humanitarian and development organizations and other relevant stakeholders to strengthen the systematic, impartial and timely collection and sharing of data disaggregated by sex, age and disability and to strengthen evidence-based policy and operational responses at all levels regarding the drivers, scale, dynamics, effects, patterns and duration of displacement in the context of slow-onset disasters, gradual environmental degradation and climate change.

18. In the same resolution, the General Assembly encouraged Member States, the United Nations and its humanitarian partners to consider engaging with the volunteer and technical communities, as appropriate, in to make use of the variety of data and information available during emergencies and disaster risk efforts. It also encouraged

the United Nations to continue to strengthen its provision of data-related services and policy advice and build the data skills of its humanitarian staff, in order to improve the effectiveness of disaster preparedness and response. In addition, it encouraged Member States to take steps to develop or to improve data collection and analysis and to facilitate the exchange of relevant non-sensitive information with humanitarian and development organizations of the United Nations, including through shared platforms and a common approach, in order to inform policy and measures designed to address disaster risks and their consequences, to support preparedness efforts, including forecast-based action and financing, and to improve the effectiveness and accountability of a needs-based humanitarian response. Furthermore, it encouraged the United Nations system, as appropriate, and other relevant actors to continue to assist developing countries in their efforts to build local and national capacities for data collection and analysis and encouraged Member States, with support from the United Nations upon request, to establish and strengthen national disaster loss databases, risk profiles and available capacities and to continue to collect, share and use such data to inform relevant policies and strategies.

19. Both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, in their resolutions 72/133 and 2018/11, on strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance, requested Member States, relevant humanitarian organizations of the United Nations system and other relevant humanitarian actors to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women in all stages of humanitarian response. and to ensure gender mainstreaming, including in the collection and analysis of disaggregated data.

20. In its resolution 72/182 on the protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons, the General Assembly also recognized the need to collect reliable, timely, longitudinal and disaggregated data, including data disaggregated by sex, age, disability and location, on internally displaced persons and the impact of protracted displacement on host communities in order to improve policy and programming, preventive measures on and response to internal displacement and to promote the achievement of durable solutions. It encouraged Member States, members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, United Nations humanitarian coordinators and country teams to contribute to the provision of reliable data on internal displacement situations, with the cooperation of the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre and the technical support and assistance of the Joint Internally Displaced Person Profiling Service, and to provide financial resources, as appropriate, in those respects.

B. Action taken or proposed by the Statistical Commission and the Statistics Division

21. The joint report on disaster-related statistics prepared by the Secretary-General, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Economic Commission for Europe and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (E/CN.3/2019/16) serves to summarize the work of the main international and regional organizations active in disaster-related statistics. It is shown in the report that there is already considerable complementarity, coordination and cooperation on the topic under the purview of the Statistical Commission. Ways to continue to build and strengthen a common statistical framework and a community of practice for disaster-related statistics are explored in the context of the multiple disciplines and areas of expertise involved.

V. Global geospatial information management

A. Action requested by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council

22. In its resolution 72/77 on international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, the General Assembly expressed its desire to have international coordination and cooperation enhanced at the global level in disaster management and emergency response through greater access to and use of geospatial information for all countries. In that context, it emphasized the need to increase the benefits of space technology and its applications and to strengthen sustainable spatial data infrastructure at the regional and national levels. It also encouraged Member States to promote the use of space-derived geospatial data.

23. In its resolution 72/132, the General Assembly also encouraged the further use of space-based and ground-based remote-sensing technologies, including as provided by the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER), as well as the sharing of geographical data, for the forecasting, prevention, mitigation and management of natural disasters. It invited Member States to continue to provide their support to the consolidation of the United Nations capability in satellite-derived geographical information for early warning, preparedness, response and early recovery.

24. The Economic and Social Council endorsed the Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters in its resolution 2018/14, as a guide for Member States to ensure the availability and accessibility of quality geospatial information and services across all phases of disaster risk reduction and management, and invited Member States, their relevant government bodies, the United Nations system, international organizations, donors, the private sector, academia and non-governmental organizations with responsibility for disaster risk reduction and management, in accordance with their mandates, to adopt the Strategic Framework. In the Strategic Framework, Member States underlined, inter alia, the need to develop a common and accessible database system of minimum/baseline geospatial information and services requirements, including comprehensive common and fundamental operational datasets, such as administrative boundaries, population, critical infrastructures and other exposure datasets, and earth observation data holdings. It also stresses the importance of developing policies for managing data collection, sharing, classification, custodianship, stewardship, security and control at the local and national levels, and recognized the importance of integrating geospatial data and statistics in disaster risk management plans and programmes, as well as the need for data distribution platforms duly recognized and supported by Member States and other key stakeholders and for adherence to data management guidelines and other geospatial information management standards to ensure interoperability of information. Furthermore, Member States called upon the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management to encourage Member States to develop and promote geospatial databases, standards, protocols and processes aimed at improving data quality and interoperability at the national and global levels.

25. In its resolution 2018/2 on the future organization and methods of work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, the Council reaffirmed the need to strengthen the joint work between the Group of Experts and the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, taking into account that places and geospatial objects referred to by geographical names should have a geospatial location established through the global geodetic reference frame.

B. Action taken or proposed by the Statistical Commission and the Statistics Division

26. In its report (E/CN.3/2019/31), the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information describes progress towards the finalization of the five principles of the global statistical geospatial framework and the adoption, by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management at its eighth session, convened in August 2018, of the Expert Group's short- and longer-term statistical-geospatial interoperability projects.

VI. International migration

A. Action requested by the General Assembly

27. In its resolution 72/179 on the protection of migrants, the General Assembly called upon the United Nations system and other relevant international organizations and multilateral institutions to enhance their cooperation in the development of methodologies for the collection and processing of statistical data on international migration and the situation of migrants in countries of origin, transit and destination and to assist Member States in their capacity-building efforts in that regard.

28. Furthermore, the General Assembly, in its resolution 72/149 on violence against women migrant workers, encouraged concerned Governments, in particular those of countries of origin, transit and destination, to avail themselves of the expertise of the United Nations, including the Statistics Division, the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), to develop and enhance appropriate sex-disaggregated national data collection, analysis and dissemination methodologies that would generate comparable data, and tracking and reporting systems on violence against women migrant workers and, wherever possible, on violations of their rights at all stages of the migration process. It also encouraged those Governments to further assess and measure recruitment costs and fees through the provision of appropriate sex-disaggregated data and analysis, where available, and to support the improvement of macrodata on migration costs and on remittances.

29. In its resolution 72/244 on modalities for the Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the General Assembly invited Member States and relevant stakeholders to consider sharing their perspectives on all dimensions of international migration, including cooperation on data collection and analysis and governance.

B. Action taken or proposed by the Statistical Commission and the Statistics Division

30. In his report on international migration statistics (E/CN.3/2019/17), the Secretary-General presents recent work undertaken by the Statistics Division in 2018 to fulfil the requests of the Statistical Commission contained in its decision 49/101, in terms of: (a) engagement of the Bureau of the Commission during the negotiation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration; and (b) the work of the Statistics Division and the Expert Group on Migration Statistics on methodological development, including on the revision of the Recommendations on Statistics for International Migration. Furthermore, the Secretary-General describes other ongoing work, including data and metadata collection and capacity-building, as

well as future priorities for the Division and the Expert Group in strengthening international migration statistics.

31. On 15 and 16 January 2018, the International Organization for Migration, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs organized the first International Forum on Migration Statistics. The Forum brought together producers, analysts and users of migration statistics to address the challenges for improving the production and use of migration data and to discuss global initiatives on migration, including on data innovation and big data for migration and capacity-building for migration data.

32. On 18 May 2018, the Chair of the Statistical Commission addressed the co-facilitators of the negotiation process on the statistical aspects of the proposed draft for a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration, which was adopted on 10 December 2018 in Marrakech, Morocco. The Chair called for coordinated efforts on data and statistics, while building upon existing initiatives and mechanisms.

VII. Gender statistics

A. Action requested by the General Assembly

33. In its resolution 72/147 on the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of its twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, the Assembly requested that reports of the Secretary-General continue to systematically address gender perspectives through gender-sensitive analysis and the provision of data disaggregated by sex and age. It also encouraged Member States, with the support of, as appropriate, United Nations entities, including UN-Women, international and regional organizations and other relevant actors, to prioritize the strengthening of national data collection and monitoring capacities with regard to statistics disaggregated by sex and age, as well as national tracking indicators for gender equality and the empowerment of women, through multisectoral efforts and partnerships.

34. In addition, in its resolution 72/148 on the improvement of the situation of women and girls in rural areas, the General Assembly urged Member States to attach greater importance to the improvement of the situation by, inter alia, addressing the lack of quality, accessible, timely and reliable data disaggregated by sex and age and statistical information on disabilities, to help with the measurement of progress and to ensure that no one is left behind, including by intensifying efforts to include women's unpaid work in official statistics, and by strengthening the capacity of national statistical offices and other relevant government institutions to collect, analyse and disseminate data, disaggregated by sex and age, and gender statistics on time use, unpaid work, land tenure, energy, water and sanitation, among other things, to support policies and actions to improve the situation of rural women and girls, and to monitor and track the implementation of such policies and actions.

35. Furthermore, the General Assembly emphasized, in its resolution 72/149, the need for objective, comprehensive and broad-based information, including sex- and age-disaggregated data and statistics, and gender-sensitive indicators to specifically address violence against women migrant workers, including in the context of discrimination. It also invited the United Nations system and other concerned intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to improve the collection, dissemination and analysis of sex- and age-disaggregated data and information in order to assist in the formulation of migration and labour policies that were, inter alia, gender-sensitive and that protected human rights, as well as to aid in policy

assessment and to continue to support national efforts to address violence against women migrant workers.

36. In its resolution 72/154 on the girl child, the General Assembly expressed deep concern about the continuing lack of recent information and statistics, disaggregated by sex, on the status of children in child-headed households, and called upon States to strengthen research, data collection and analysis on the girl child, disaggregated by household structure, sex, age, disability status, economic situation, marital status and geographical location, and improve gender statistics on time use, unpaid care work and water and sanitation in order to provide a better understanding of the situations of girls, especially of the multiple forms of discrimination that they face, and to inform the development of necessary policies and programme responses. Subsequently, the Assembly, in its resolution 72/234, further encouraged Governments in cooperation with the United Nations system and other relevant international organizations, upon the request of Governments, to collect, analyse and disseminate sex-disaggregated data and statistics and to assess the impact of associated policy measures on women.

37. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2018/7 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system, called upon the United Nations system to enhance standards and methodologies to improve the systematic collection, analysis, dissemination and use of accurate, reliable, transparent and comparable data and statistics and, where applicable and with due respect for confidentiality, open data and statistics related to achieving gender equality, disaggregated by, inter alia, income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographical location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.

B. Action taken or proposed by the Statistical Commission and the Statistics Division

38. The Statistics Division, in collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of the Government of Japan, organized the seventh Global Forum on Gender Statistics under the Global Gender Statistics Programme and the guidance of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics. The event brought together producers and users of gender statistics from national and international statistical offices, other government agencies, international organizations, academia, civil society and the donor community. The Forum provided an opportunity for discussion on ways to improve data and evidence for gender policies, in the context of the 2030 Agenda. In particular, the Forum:

(a) Reviewed methodological developments for better gender statistics, including the nexus between gender and environment; measuring asset ownership and entrepreneurship from a gender perspective; monitoring international migration; and producing data on gender identity;

(b) Took stock of national practices and strategies for measuring and monitoring gender concerns, in line with the global Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework;

(c) Discussed how statistical offices could communicate more effectively to ensure that policy makers, the media and the general public could identify, understand, and make full use of available data;

(d) Provided an overview of the latest research/assessment of progress towards gender equality, and an overview of the availability of disaggregated gender data, to ensure no one is left behind.

39. The Division organized an expert group meeting on innovative and effective ways to collect time-use statistics, to take stock of best practices in countries with regard to producing time-use data and to discuss the content and updating of the *Guide to Producing Statistics on Time Use: Measuring Paid and Unpaid Work*. The expert group meeting also contributed to the gender statistics and indicators component of the Programme on Statistics and Data under the tenth tranche of the United Nations Development Account and, in particular, to its expected accomplishment 5 (enhance the capacity of target countries to adopt and apply statistical methods to assess gender gaps in selected key areas of women's empowerment, classified as tier II indicators in the Sustainable Development Goal framework).

40. The Division, in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank, ECA, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Statistics Division of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, organized a series of regional workshops on the measurement of asset ownership from a gender perspective. The workshops were organized under the Evidence and Data for Gender Equality project and brought together national statisticians to discuss the concepts and methods outlined in the report on methodological guidelines for the production of statistics on asset ownership from a gender perspective through household surveys.

VIII. Inclusive development for persons with disability

A. Action requested by the General Assembly

41. In its resolution 72/162 entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto: situation of women and girls with disabilities", the General Assembly noted that the continuing lack of reliable statistics, data and information on the situation of persons with disabilities at the national, regional and global levels contributed to their exclusion in official statistics, policies and programmes, and recognized the need to intensify efforts to build the capacity of Member States, and to strengthen data collection and analysis and disaggregate data by disability, sex and age to support the development of evidence-based policies and programmes inclusive of women and girls with disabilities.

42. In the same resolution, the General Assembly called upon States to collect and analyse data disaggregated by income, sex, race, age, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant to national contexts to assist with the identification and eradication of barriers and all forms of discrimination that prevent women and girls with disabilities from enjoying all the rights stipulated in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and to improve data collection systems for adequate monitoring and evaluation frameworks on the implementation of the Convention and the Sustainable Development Goals in relation to women and girls with disabilities.

43. In addition, the General Assembly urged States and other relevant stakeholders, including national human rights institutions, to continue to support the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by, inter alia, supporting the disaggregation of data by disability, sex and age for specific indicators, on the basis of the Washington Group short set of questions on disability and other data collection methodologies, where relevant, to assist States in measuring the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 associated targets and programming policies in the context of the Goals.

B. Action taken or proposed by the Statistical Commission and the Statistics Division

44. Pursuant to Statistical Commission decision 49/106, adopted at its forty-ninth session (see E/2018/24, chap. I, sect. B), the Intersecretariat Working Group on Household Surveys has developed a work plan to focus on cross-cutting issues, including data disaggregation (see E/CN.3/2019/25). The Statistics Division serves as the secretariat of the Working Group. Persons with disabilities are one of the populations being prioritized in the workstream of the Working Group, together with other populations, for which data disaggregation is needed, as stressed in the 2030 Agenda. The Division as secretariat of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators has also assisted the Working Group in advancing the activities of the data disaggregation workstream. The Inter-Agency and Expert Group is currently considering policy priorities as recommended by the stakeholders in their respective areas of work, including those concerned with persons with disabilities. The priorities will determine the indicators and related dimensions to be considered for data disaggregation in the global indicator framework. Details of the work of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group in this area are contained in its report (E/CN.3/2019/2) and in the background document on data disaggregation, which will be available from the website of the Commission (https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/50thsession/documents/#background).

45. The Division maintains a comprehensive international repository on disability statistics, with data and metadata on disability from official statistics compiled from national population and housing censuses, household surveys and administrative data. On the basis of recent data collected, the Division has launched a web data portal to facilitate the accessibility of information by the broader user community, with the aim of supporting analysis of the situation of persons with disabilities in different countries, in terms of the prevalence of disabilities and the differentials, by socioeconomic and living conditions, of persons with and without disabilities.

IX. Crime prevention and criminal justice

A. Action requested by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council

46. In its resolution 72/55 on problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus, the General Assembly encouraged States to consider, where relevant, developing national, regional and subregional indicators on ammunition management aimed at achieving relevant targets of the Sustainable Development Goals related to the reduction of illicit arms flows and the prevention of violence through strengthened institutions, and asked the Secretariat to assist States by developing, upon their request and within existing resources, options for such indicators.

47. In its resolution 72/156 on combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, the General Assembly underlined the importance of data and statistics on racist and xenophobic crimes for identifying the types of offences committed, the profiles of victims and of perpetrators and whether the latter were affiliated with extremist movements or groups, thus enhancing better understanding of the phenomenon and identifying effective measures to address such racist and xenophobic crimes.

48. In its resolution 72/175 on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity, the General Assembly called upon States to create and maintain, in law and in practice, a safe and enabling environment for journalists to perform their work independently and without undue interference, inter alia, by means of collecting and analysing concrete quantitative and qualitative data on attacks or violence against journalists, that are disaggregated by, among other factors, sex.

49. In its resolution 72/196 on strengthening the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity, the General Assembly invited Member States to develop national plans for the gradual adoption of the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes and to strengthen national statistical systems of criminal justice, and requested UNODC, within its existing mandate, to continue to strengthen the regular collection, analysis and dissemination of accurate, reliable and comparable data and information, including, as appropriate, data disaggregated by sex, age and other relevant criteria, and strongly encouraged Member States to share such data and information with the Office.

50. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2018/17 on the rule of law, crime prevention and criminal justice in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, welcomed the efforts of UNODC to assist Member States in improving systems for collecting and analysing data on crime prevention and criminal justice at all levels, where necessary, including gender-specific data, in order to promote the rule of law and achieve sustainable development, and noted the application of the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes.

B. Action taken or proposed by the Statistical Commission and the Statistics Division

51. After the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework in 2016, the work on crime and criminal justice statistics was prioritized in relation to Goal indicators on security, violence, trafficking, access toc justice and corruption. In its report (E/CN.3/2019/19), UNODC reviews activities and accomplishments and describes existing challenges and activities to be undertaken, including the development of new methodologies to measure illicit financial flows and sexual harassment, and technical support to countries and regions with regard to implementing surveys (e.g., on corruption and crime victimization and on improving administrative data to align data with the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes).

X. Sustainable agriculture and food security

A. Action requested by the General Assembly

52. In its resolution 72/205 on commodities, the General Assembly underlined the importance of timely, accurate and transparent information in helping to address excessive food price volatility, noted that global and regional initiatives, including the Agricultural Market Information System and its Rapid Response Forum, the joint organization data initiative and other regional data platforms and programmes, and urged the participating international organizations, private sector actors and Governments to ensure the public dissemination of timely and quality food market information products.

53. In its resolution 72/215 on agricultural technology for sustainable development, the General Assembly recognized that the development and open access to mega data

and information would bring about profound changes in agricultural research, agricultural extension and rural development, and stressed the need to support and strengthen information systems and statistical systems for better disaggregated data collection and processing, which would be key in monitoring progress in the adoption of sustainable agricultural technologies and their impact on improving food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture. In that connection, the Assembly invited the United Nations system and all relevant stakeholders to consider ways to make available data and information relating to agriculture and food systems, including meteorology, big data, the Internet of things, satellite imagery, early warning systems and other data-based technologies, that could help to build the resilience of family farmers and smallholder producers, optimize yields and support rural livelihoods.

54. In the same resolution, the General Assembly stressed the importance of indicators that could be used to formulate targeted policies towards the adoption of agricultural technology and to measure their impact on the Sustainable Development Goals, and in this regard encouraged Member States, in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders, to continue to contribute to the ongoing work of the Statistical Commission on the global indicator framework.

B. Action taken or proposed by the Statistical Commission and the Statistics Division

55. The Global Working Group on Big Data for Official Statistics held an Open Day in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, at the margins of the United Nations World Data Forum, 2018, to demonstrate how the use of alternative and big data sources combined with the latest technology could be done and would improve the quality and relevance of official statistics. The programme included, inter alia, sessions on the use of satellite data for agriculture and environment statistics to support the development of the Sustainable Development Goal indicators.

56. The Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators reviewed the methodology development for the remaining three tier III indicators under Goal 2 in September and November 2018 and reclassified them as tier II indicators. As a result, all indicators in the global Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework for monitoring Goal 2 are tier I or II indicators, which means that all Goal 2 indicators have an international established methodology and standards.

XI. Ageing

A. Action requested by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council

57. In its resolution 72/144 on the follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing, the General Assembly recommended that Member States enhance their capacity to more effectively collect data, statistics and qualitative information, disaggregated when necessary by relevant factors, including sex and disability, in order to improve assessment of the situation of older persons. It also recognized that the data revolution presented new opportunities and challenges for the use of new data to help with the measurement of progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in particular its aspects of relevance to older persons, and to ensure that no one was left behind. In that context, the Assembly welcomed the inclusion of the topic of ageing and age-disaggregated data on the agenda of the Statistical Commission. It also encouraged the international community and the relevant agencies of the United

Nations system, within their respective mandates, to support national efforts to provide funding for research and data-collection initiatives on ageing, as appropriate, in order to better understand the challenges and opportunities presented by population ageing and to provide policymakers with more accurate and more specific information with regard to a gender perspective on ageing.

58. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2018/6 on the third review and appraisal of the Madrid international Plan for Action on Aging, 2002, encouraged the international community and the relevant organizations of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, to support national efforts, upon request, and to provide funding for research and the collection of data disaggregated by age, in addition to data disaggregated by sex and disability, in order to better understand the challenges and opportunities presented by population ageing and to provide policymakers with more accurate, practical and specific information and analysis on ageing, gender and disability, such as for policy planning, monitoring and evaluation.

B. Action taken or proposed by the Statistical Commission and the Statistics Division

59. In his report (E/CN.3/2019/23) on demographic statistics, the Secretary-General presents activities carried out by the Statistics Division in that area, provides an update on the development of and related activities of the Titchfield Group on ageing statistics, which was established by the Commission at its forty-ninth session. The overall objective of the Group is to develop standardized tools and methods for producing both data disaggregated by age and ageing-related data and to encourage countries to do the same. The first formal meeting of the Titchfield Group, held on 26 and 27 June 2018, included the participation of representatives of national statistical offices, entities of the United Nations system, civil society and academia set the scope of the work programme of the Group for the next five years.

XII. External debt sustainability and development assistance

A. Action requested by the General Assembly

60. In its resolution 72/204 on external debt sustainability and development, the General Assembly stressed the need for improved data collection and quality in areas that included domestic public debt, domestic and external private debt. It reiterated that timely and comprehensive data on the level and composition of debt were necessary for, inter alia, building early warning systems aimed at limiting the impact of debt crises, called for debtor and creditor countries to intensify their efforts to collect and release data, where appropriate, welcomed the ongoing work of relevant institutions to apply innovative tools for monitoring financial stress in developing countries and to create a central data registry that included information on debt restructuring, and called for donors to consider increasing their support for technical cooperation programmes aimed at increasing the statistical capacity of developing countries in that regard. In the same resolution, the Assembly recognized the safeguards of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in its statistical system to enhance the debt sustainability of recipient countries.

61. Subsequently, in its resolution 72/233 on the implementation of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008–2017), the General Assembly stressed the importance of mobilizing greater domestic support towards the fulfilment of official development assistance commitments, including by providing

data on aid effectiveness, and urged countries to track and report resource allocations for advancing gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

B. Action taken or proposed by the Statistical Commission and the Statistics Division

62. The Commission will have before it the report of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on the review of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Finance Statistics and its substructures (E/CN.3/2019/9). In its report, IMF proposes to transfer the activities of the Task Force related to conceptual/methodological issues on external debt statistics to the IMF's Committee on Balance of Payments Statistics and on public debt statistics to the Inter-secretariat Working Group on National Accounts and the IMF Government Finance Statistics Advisory Committee.

XIII. Health data and statistics

A. Action requested by the General Assembly

63. In its resolution 2018/4, the Economic and Social Council invited development partners to continue to assist African countries in their efforts to strengthen national health systems, including by providing reliable health information and data.

64. In its resolution 72/309 on consolidating gains and accelerating efforts to control and eliminate malaria in developing countries, particularly in Africa, by 2030, the General Assembly recognized the critical need to strengthen malaria surveillance and data quality in all regions where malaria is endemic in order to accurately measure progress, combat resurgence and target resources, particularly in the face of growing resistance to treatment and preventive measures, and recognized also that additional financing was needed to strengthen national and regional surveillance systems and to support the sharing and analysis of best practices to address urgent programmatic challenges, improve monitoring and evaluation, and conduct regular financial planning and gap analyses.

B. Action taken or proposed by the Statistical Commission and the Statistics Division

65. In its report (E/CN.3/2019/24),the World Health Organization outlines its current work on health statistics in relation to monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals and its new monitoring framework to track progress towards the triple billion targets – 1 billion more people benefiting from universal health coverage, 1 billion more people better protected from health emergencies, and 1 billion more people enjoying better health and well-being, all by 2023 – which are key milestones towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal targets.

XIV. Broader measures of progress

A. Action requested by the General Assembly

66. In its resolution 72/223 entitled "Harmony with Nature", the General Assembly recognized that gross domestic product was not designed as an indicator for measuring environmental degradation resulting from human activity, nor was it an

indicator of development, and also recognized the need for broader measures of progress to complement gross domestic product in order to better inform policy decisions. It encouraged all countries to develop and strengthen the quality and quantity of basic national statistical data on the three dimensions of sustainable development, invited the international community and the pertinent bodies of the United Nations system to assist the efforts of developing countries by providing capacity-building and technical support, and noted the ongoing work of the Statistical Commission, as set out in Commission decision 44/114 (see E/2013/24, chap. I, sect. C), on a work programme to develop broader measures of progress and to conduct a technical review of existing efforts in this area.

B. Action taken or proposed by the Statistical Commission and the Statistics Division

67. In its report (E/CN.3/2019/8), the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts highlights progress made in addressing important conceptual issues, some of which may extend beyond the 2008 System of Nations Accounts (SNA), and its support to Member States that are lagging behind. The Working Group also provides information on issues emerging from the implementation of SNA, in particular the outcome of the meeting of the Advisory Expert Group on National Accounts.

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Draft multi-year programme of work of the Statistical Commission, 2019–2023

Note by the Secretariat

Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/51, the draft multi-year programme of work of the Statistical Commission for the period 2019–2023 is set out below. Reflecting comments from members and observers of the Commission and a review of its workplans by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, the draft constitutes a revision of the draft multi-year programme of work for the period 2018–2022 (E/CN.3/2018/36), which was considered by the Commission at its forty-ninth session.

* E/CN.3/2019/1.

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Draft multi-year programme of work of the Statistical Commission, 2019–2023

Agenda item	*Approximate current frequency*	*2019*	*2020*	*2021*	*2022*	*2023*
1. **Demographic and social statistics**						
(a) Demographic statistics/population and housing censuses	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
(b) Human settlements statistics	5 years	X				
(c) Health statistics	2 years	X		X		X
(d) Disability statistics, including Washington Group on Disability Statistics	2 years		X		X	
(e) Social statistics	5 years				X	
(f) Gender statistics	2 years		X		X	
(g) Poverty statistics	10 years					
(h) Statistics on drugs and drug use	3 years	X			X	
(i) Crime statistics	3 years	X			X	
(j) International migration statistics	5 years	X				
(k) Refugee statistics	2 years		X		X	
(l) Work and employment statistics	5 years					X
(m) Education statistics	3 years	X			X	
(n) Culture statistics	5 years			X		
(o) Household surveys	2 years	X		X		X
(p) Civil registration and vital statistics	2 years		X		X	
(q) Ageing-related statistics and age-disaggregated data	2 years		X		X	
2. **Economic statistics**						
(a) National accounts	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
(b) Agricultural and rural statistics	2 years		X		X	
(c) Industrial statistics	3 years	X			X	
(d) Business registers, including Wiesbaden Group on Business Registers	2 years	X		X		X
(e) Energy statistics, including Oslo Group on Energy Statistics	2 years		X		X	
(f) International trade and economic globalization statistics[a]	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
(g) Digital trade and e-commerce statistics	5 years					X
(h) Service statistics, including Voorburg Group on Service Statistics	2 years		X		X	
(i) Information and communications technology statistics	2 years		X		X	
(j) Tourism statistics	3 years		X			X
(k) Finance statistics	2 years	X		X		X
(l) International Comparison Programme	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
(m) Price statistics, including Ottawa Group on Price Indices and Intersecretariat Working Group on Price Statistics	2 years	X		X		X
(n) Statistics on science, technology and innovation	5 years					X
(o) Informal sector statistics, including Delhi Group on Informal Sector Statistics	3 years			X		
(p) Transformative agenda/Handbook of Statistical Organization	2 years		X		X	
(q) Short-term economic indicators	3 years		X			X
3. **Natural resources and environment statistics**						
(a) Environment statistics	2 years		X		X	

Agenda item	*Approximate current frequency*	*2019*	*2020*	*2021*	*2022*	*2023*
(b) Environmental-economic accounting, including London Group on Environmental Accounting	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
(c) Climate change statistics	5 years					X
(d) Disaster-related statistics	3 years	X			X	
4. Activities not classified by field						
(a) Coordination of statistical programmes	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
(b) Statistics of human development	5 years			X		
(c) Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and principles governing international statistical activities	5 years	X				
(d) International statistical classifications	2 years		X		X	
(e) Common open standards for the exchange and sharing of data and metadata	2 years	X		X		X
(f) Presentation of statistical data and metadata	10 years			X		
(g) Statistical capacity-building	2 years	X		X		X
(h) Dissemination of statistics by Statistics Division/Statistics Division publications	5 years		X			
(i) Development indicators/Millennium Development Goals/Sustainable Development Goals	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
(j) Follow-up to the policy decisions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
(k) Working methods of the Statistical Commission	5 years	X				
(l) National quality assurance frameworks	2 years	X		X		X
(m) Integration of statistical and geospatial information	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
(n) Big data	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
(o) World Statistics Day	5 years			X		
(p) Regional statistical development	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
(q) Governance, peace and security statistics, including Praia Group on Governance Statistics	2 years		X		X	
(r) Open data	2 years	X		X		X
(s) Programme questions (Statistics Division)	Annual	X	X	X	X	X
Total number of items		**30**	**28**	**26**	**31**	**25**

[a] Includes international trade statistics and statistics on international trade in services.

Programme reviews (2003–2014)

2014: Broader measures of progress

2013: Integration of statistical and geospatial information

2012: Population and housing censuses

2011: Gender statistics

2010: National quality assurance frameworks

2009: Climate change and official statistics

2008: Employment statistics

2007: Education statistics

2006: Industrial statistics

2005: Energy statistics

2004: Social statistics

2003: Statistics of services

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